

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE TORRANCE TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Traffic Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:01 p.m. on Monday, March 4, 2013 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Commissioner Siani led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Herring, Sargent, Siani,  
Tsao, Walter, and Chairperson Rudolph.

Absent: Commissioner Furey.

Also Present: Engineering Manager Semaan, Associate Engineer Sedadi,  
Assistant Engineer Gruezo, Planning Manager Lodan,  
Planning Associate Crump, Fire Chief Dumais, Economic  
Development Manager Fulton, Police Lieutenant D'Anjou,  
Engineering Manager Overstreet, Engineering Manager  
Bilezerian, and Traffic and Lighting Supervisor Hall.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sargent moved to grant Commissioner Furey an excused absence for the March 4, 2013 Traffic Commission meeting. Commissioner Walter seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Sargent moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Siani seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Furey).

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**5a. MINUTES OF JANUARY 15, 2013 AND FEBRUARY 4, 2013**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Siani moved for the approval of the January 15, 2013 and February 4, 2013 Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Sargent seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Furey; Commissioner Tsao abstaining on approval of the January 15, 2013 minutes).

**6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1**

Chairperson Rudolph explained the policies and procedures of the Traffic Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to City Council.

**7. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Siani moved to take Item 7b. out of order. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Furey).

**7b. RECEIVE AND FILE INFORMATION REGARDING VIA CORONA**

Engineering Manager Semaan provided background and noted that supplemental material was available that was received after agenda packets were prepared. Referring to Attachment 1, he reported that on January 8, 2013 the City Manager's office provided City Council with an informational chronology of events that led to the installation of parking restriction signage at the turnaround on Via Corona. He explained the aerial views in Attachments 2, 3, and 4 and various photographs in Attachments 5, 6, and 7. He noted that Via el Sereno is a private and not a public street. He explained the Assessor's Map Book pages in Attachments 8, 9, 10, and 11 as well as the Parcel Map in Attachment 12 approved in 1970 that created the turnaround. He stated that Attachment 13 is the original Tract Map that created Via Corona and Via Lado, Attachment 14 is the Field/Boundary survey of the retaining wall location, and Attachment 15 are letters sent by the Building Regulations Division to property owners regarding the retaining wall. He noted that the supplemental material includes City Council action taken in 1970 approving the final Parcel Map. He concluded that investigation revealed that the turnaround is not a parking area and, to reduce liability and increase access for emergency vehicles, the City had to post No Parking signs.

Betty Tanaka, Via Corona, expressed concern about the shortage of parking spaces and difficulty backing out of her driveway since the installation of No Parking signage. She noted that residents on Via Corona were not notified prior to the installation.

Thomas Cook, Via Corona, stated that residents have been using the turnaround since 1986 without any problems and that trash trucks always go forward and backward without turning around. He maintained that the parking restrictions have taken away 20% of their available parking.

Tom Tanaka, Via Corona, received clarification from staff that the paved turnaround area is City property and that City Council approved the final Parcel Map in 1970.

Gordon Reiler, Via Corona, distributed his letter dated March 4, 2013. He stated that he surveyed approximately 20 dead-end streets in Southwest Torrance and found four streets that do not have a turnaround space: Via El Sereno, Via Lado, Lorna Street, and Milne Drive. He took issue with the inconvenience caused by the No Parking signage and stressed the value of notification prior to installation.

Mr. Cook, referring to Tract Maps that he received two weeks ago, stated that it does not appear that residents are responsible for the retaining wall.

Engineering Manager Semaan called attention to Attachment 9, Assessor's Map Book 7532 Page 34, and noted that ownership is a matter of record from the County Assessor's office.

Commissioner Sargent related his observations when he drove around the area and pointed out that responsibility for the retaining wall is not in the Commission's purview. He received clarification from staff that there is a City ordinance conditioning a turnaround for dead-end alleys and that residents would need to request an exemption from City Council.

Commissioner Siani stated that she visited the area and observed that no large vehicle has the ability to use the turnaround. She indicated that there has been no problem in 42 years and that residents should be able to park there.

Chairperson Rudolph received clarification from staff that it is illegal for residents to park in front of their driveways, that the turnaround meets today's standards, and that no advance notice was given because law dictates that a turnaround is a no parking designated area.

Commissioners Tsao and Herring indicated that residents should seek an exemption from City Council.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Herring moved to request that City Council review and reconsider removing the No Parking/Tow Away signage at the vehicular turnaround on Via Corona. Commissioner Sargent seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Furey).

Engineering Manager Semaan advised residents they would be notified when the item is scheduled for City Council's consideration.

The Commission was in recess from 8:00 to 8:08 p.m.

## **7. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

### **7a. STATUS UPDATE ON THE PROTECTED PERMISSIVE LEFT TURN SIGNAL**

Assistant Engineer Gruezo provided background and recommended that the Commission review the staff report and consultant's presentation, provide input, and direct staff to proceed with a public outreach program to educate the community regarding Protected Permissive Left Turn (PPLT) with Flashing Yellow Arrow (FYA) traffic signals. He introduced Project Manager and Executive Vice-President Mark Miller and Director of Project Development Rob Kuehn from Albert Grover & Associates.

Mr. Miller provided a PowerPoint presentation "Flashing Yellow Arrow – Traffic Signal Left Turn Phasing Upgrade Project." He described Albert Grover & Associates' background, noting that they were the first to implement FYA PPLT in California ten years ago. He reported that their project team identified key items critical for successful

implementation of FYA at four intersections in Torrance: collision history, sight distance, vehicle speeds, and number of lanes.

He reviewed findings for the four intersections: Sepulveda Boulevard at Hickory Avenue, Sepulveda Boulevard at Arlington Avenue, Sepulveda at Cabrillo Avenue, and Prairie Avenue at 182<sup>nd</sup> Street. He presented the recommendation to install PPLT with FYA at the following intersections: Northbound and Southbound Arlington Avenue at Sepulveda Boulevard, Northbound and Southbound Cabrillo Avenue at Sepulveda Boulevard, and all approaches on Prairie Avenue & 182<sup>nd</sup> Street. He recommended introducing drivers to FYA for these directions before moving forward with implementation on Sepulveda Boulevard due to its high volumes of traffic, higher speeds, and number of lanes, noting that removal of the north-south split phasing to concurrent permissive operation would save approximately 12 seconds per cycle on Sepulveda Boulevard.

Mr. Miller discussed plans for public education regarding the FYA display that include mailers with utility bills for two billing cycles, public information handouts, mailers within the neighborhoods of each intersection, press releases in local newspapers, local news channels, City's website, and public outreach at DMV facilities, Police Department, and Torrance Unified School District. He recommended a two-tier approach—first, notifying the public what is being proposed and then again once installation has taken place. He showed examples of public information handouts and asked Commissioners for their input.

Engineering Manager Semaan added that staff wants to go directly to the schools and homeowners associations within the boundaries of the intersections.

Commissioner Siani suggested a YouTube video and Commissioner Sargent suggested temporary changeable message signs.

When Chairperson Rudolph suggested making the section head yellow, Mr. Miller expressed concern that this might distract drivers from the flashing yellow indication. He stated that placing orange flags before the intersection could be considered for the first month and recommended installation of "Yield on Flashing Yellow" signage.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Walter moved to direct staff to proceed with a public outreach program to educate the community regarding Protected Permissive Left Turn (PPLT) with Flashing Yellow Arrow (FYA) traffic signals. Commissioner Tsao seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Furey).

The Commission was in recess from 8:40 to 8:45 p.m.

#### **7c. CONTINUATION OF DEVELOPING TRAFFIC COMMISSION WORK PLAN**

This item was continued from the February 4, 2013 Commission meeting when Commissioners offered suggestions for development of a new Traffic Commission Work Plan. Engineering Manager Semaan introduced Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Associate Crump, Economic Development Manager Fulton, Fire Chief Dumais, Police Lieutenant D'Anjou, Engineering Manager Overstreet, Engineering Manager Bilezerian, and Traffic and Lighting Supervisor Hall. He stated that representatives were invited to

this meeting to address suggestions that were made at the last meeting and any new suggestions made tonight.

Planning Manager Lodan addressed Commissioner Siani's suggestion last month to use unused railroad and utility rights of way as landscape and/or bike paths. He discussed the long-range vision of the City in the General Plan and the Elements in the document that include Circulation. He pointed out that there are often restraints with ownership as well as safety and technical aspects of things that can be introduced in rights of way. He stated that Southern California Edison properties under the transmission lines are zoned for industrial uses and that there would probably need to be a zone change, General Plan amendment, and environmental assessment if that land became unused or available to the City. He referred to the Community Resources Element of the General Plan that includes policies that encourage the use of public utility easements and conversion of abandoned railroad rights of way for compatible recreational purposes. He stated that to a large extent the goal of this potential Work Plan item already exists in the framework of the General Plan.

Following a brief discussion, Commissioners determined that the suggestion should be removed from the list of potential Work Plan priorities.

Commissioners and staff discussed Chairperson Rudolph's suggestion made at the last meeting to "Identify paths/locations for various alternate modes of transportation, but not limited to existing roadways." Engineering Manager Semaan pointed out some of the challenges that a "straight line approach" might create, noting that existing or potential pathways would be more viable. He discussed how potential bicycle facilities are explored as they become available and described a current project under design for a Class II bike lane on Palos Verdes Boulevard from Pacific Coast Highway to the south City limits.

Planning Manager Lodan stated that creative ideas are often brainstormed during the Planning process but that any recommendations for conditions of approval have to be cost effective and have a reasonable connection between the project being proposed and the desired improvement. He stated that staff looks for opportunities as they come up, primarily improvements that are inexpensive to implement, have nexus, are easily obtainable, contribute to the overall network, and are not overly burdensome.

Economic Development Manager Fulton discussed efforts by Discover Torrance to develop a shuttle service that would provide hotel guests a link to various attractions in the City. She stated that the group worked with the Transit Department to identify an efficient and inexpensive shuttle system and determined that there would need to be at least two loops. She noted that grant opportunities, contracting with a private shuttle company, purchasing a bus, and providing taxi vouchers have been considered. She stated that there is definite interest and representatives from Discover Torrance would be willing to discuss their research with the Commission. She shared information about past efforts to build a pedestrian bridge across Hawthorne Boulevard and a current proposal being considered for a conference center in the City. She stated that she envisions a shuttle service that would be more inclusive than just for hotel guests.

The potential Work Plan item regarding speed humps was discussed. Fire Chief Dumais expressed concern about delayed response times caused when emergency vehicles are forced to slow down because of speed humps. Police Lieutenant D'Anjou

stated that agencies that have installed speed humps have determined that they are ineffective, potentially dangerous to drivers, costly to install and maintain, and generate complaints from citizens who live near them. Engineering Manager Bilezerian pointed out that speed humps often divert traffic to other streets, creating a domino effect. There was a consensus among Commissioners to eliminate the proposal from the list of potential Work Plan items.

Discussion centered on the suggestion to "Paint block numbers on pavement/street name signs on arterial streets." Police and Fire Department representatives stated that they would welcome block numbers on curbs to increase response times but advised against putting them on the street. Engineering Manager Bilezerian suggested incorporating block numbers on existing street name signs, noting that signs are more durable than paint. "Addresses stenciled on curb" was added to the list of potential Work Plan items.

Engineering Manager Semaan led a brief discussion regarding "Access restrictions at driveways." He stated that, unless they hear from the Police Department that there is a safety issue, they are reluctant to make changes on existing properties because restrictions may impact the well being of the operation of the business.

The proposal to have bicycle lanes in color was discussed. Traffic and Lighting Supervisor Hall stated that there would be cost and maintenance issues and Lieutenant D'Anjou expressed concern that there would be slippage when wet unless a special paint is used. Engineering Manager Bilezerian stated that adding a six inch white separation line would be more feasible.

Commissioner Sargent directed staff to research what kind of paint is used for bicycle lanes in the City of Long Beach before eliminating this suggestion.

Engineering Manager Overstreet shared information about railroads and the "Quiet Zone" study that was conducted. She noted that civil improvements, such as raising the median, are expensive, averaging approximately \$300,000 per crossing. She stated that from a traffic standpoint there is not a good cost to benefit ratio. She discussed proposals for grade separations being considered for Plaza del Amo, adding that it could cost as much as \$17 million and 10 years.

Police Lieutenant D'Anjou addressed the potential Work Plan item to "Meet with Police Department regarding traffic problems in the City." He pointed out that problem areas are often transient and questioned if the Commission's interest is based on citations issued, citizen complaints, or accidents. He offered to send in highlights every month or two to the Commission and it was determined that the proposal does not need to be a Work Plan item.

Engineering Manager Semaan stated that he would share staff's ideas for Work Plan items at the April 1, 2013 Commission meeting and suggested continuing the process until that time.

**7d. RECEIVE AND FILE QUARTERLY TRAFFIC COMMISSION SUMMARY OF REQUESTS**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Siani moved to continue Item 7d until the April 1, 2013 Commission meeting. Commissioner Herring seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Furey)

**8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**8a.** Commissioner Walter announced his resignation from the Traffic Commission and Commissioners bid him a fond farewell.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

At 10.22 p.m., Chairperson Rudolph adjourned the meeting to April 1, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room, Torrance City Hall.

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| Approved as Submitted<br>April 1, 2013<br>s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk |
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